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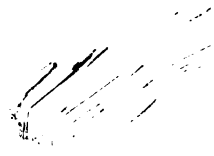
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THE

RUINS OF ATHENS;

TITANIA'S BANQUET, A MASK;

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY ^{George} G. HILL.
//

BOSTON:

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The first piece in the following collection was begun at Piræus, in the Autumn of 1828; at which time, Athens was held by the Turks, and in its extreme state of ruin and desolation. With the exception of such additions and alterations as a careful revision has suggested, it was published anonymously in the summer of 1831, together with several shorter poems, for the most part descriptive of objects and incidents observed by the writer on the shores of the Mediterranean. To these are now added a few others.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 1838.

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THE RUINS OF ATHENS.

QUID PANDIONÆ RESTANT NISI NOMEN ATHENÆ ?

Ovid.

THE RUINS OF ATHENS.

I.

The stars recede in silence, till the gun,
Far flashing, ere the vapors of the night
Are scattered, thunders from the Parthenon.
The mountains, as their summits catch the light,
Withdraw their shadows, and from each old height
— Whose gods have fled, and of their dwelling-place
See cross or crescent mark the mouldered site —
Send up their dewy incense; from their face,
Light curling as they flee, the clouds melt into space.

II.

Alas! for her, the beautiful, but lone,
Dethroned queen! all desolate she stands,
Dropping her tears upon the time-worn stone,
Whose legend dimly tells when her free bands
Wrested from kings their sceptres, and with hands,
Red with the blood of Satraps, on her showered
The spoils of conquered, gold of subject lands:
The isles their tributary tridents lowered
In homage at her feet: she spake, and monarchs cowered.

III.

The bark flies on and shuns the lonely shore,
The bay, whose wave seems never to have borne
A keel, or rippled to the dip of oar:
But the shy sea-bird there has found a lorn
And quiet home, and of the plover o'er
The hills is heard the melancholy cry;
And where she sat, the city, she before
Whose arms the East bent her imperial eye,
A solitude! a wreck! whose relics grass-grown lie!

IV.

But so it is: Earth from her old lap shakes
Cities as dust, the myriads of to-day
To-morrow rot, the harrow comes and rakes
The soil — they fertilize their kindred clay.
And not for them the dews are wept away
From boughs that, bright with dripping verdure, wave
To winds with odors laden, as if they
Were gathered from no flowers that strew the grave,
Where sleep, alas! for Greece, the relics of her brave.

V.

The Roman, the victorious, — he whose pride
It should have been her birth-right to reclaim,
Nor crush and trample with colossal stride, —
The conqueror and the despoiler came.
Chained to whose triumph-car and taught to tame
Her freeborn spirit to subjection, she,
Whose sword had been her sceptre, and whose name
A terror to imperial sway, her knee
Bent, never more to rise a ruler of the free —

VI.

Not, till the Goth her monuments had laid
In dust and trod their ashes, and the West
Her cross-led but more savage host arrayed
In sight of the unconquered strait, whose breast
The Persian sepulchred, and of the crest
Of the proud isle,¹ that seems a mountain-tomb
By nature piled and consecrated, lest
Her fame should perish — till the Turk his drum
Had beat where arts, of old, arms, freedom found a home.

VII.

But, as the rain-drops, that have disappeared
Laden with life for other lands, return
And fertilize, though tempest-borne, the seared
Shorn soil whose harvest drains its thirsty urn;
So shall the spirit that in Greece had birth,
— Though now, rewoke, a wasting flame it burn, —
At length the plough, where hostile hoofs her earth
In conflict trample, see uproot the fern,
And arts revive and War his idle weapon spurn.

¹ Salamis.

VIII.

“On”! is the cry, and other hordes may band
And build, like vultures, though the crescent wane,
In each old fastness of her mountain land,
Rewaste her earth and link her shattered chain;
But Leuctra, Salamis, Plataea’s plain
And wild Thermopylae’s sepulchral pass,
The monuments of nature, these remain.
Perished the stone, but who the sighing grass
Wanders unheeded by where fell Leonidas!

IX.

From cliff and cape the temple, slowly bowed,
May fall, the tomb commingle with the clay
It rose to shelter, and the mighty shroud
Their memory in deeper gloom, as they
Had never been,—her very name decay;
But, from the spot, where rose her song in fight,
Her shout, as on the memorable day
She put the armed Orient to flight,
A spirit breathes, a power, no coming time shall blight.

X.

Here stood the Greek, and there the Persian shrank,
Rider on rider thrown and shield on shield;
Bristling with spears, an iron crop, they sank
As the ripe harvests to the sickle yield;
Tombless to rot and fertilize the field,
As weeds, they came as conquerors to reap.
Such be the lot of all that fear to wield
Arms 'gainst the tyrant in whose train they creep;
No tongue record their fall, nor tear their ashes steep!

XI.

These are her monuments! to these, as turns
The plough some warlike relic from its mould,
Shall point the sire: the stripling — as he learns
How the brave band, though nations were enrolled
To swell the Persian's, thinned his host of old —
Feel the wild spark, with stirring memories fraught,
Thrill his young breast, the closing ranks behold
Rush fearless on, the weapon grasp, in thought,
And follow where they trod and conquer where they fought.

XII.

And many a scene, the Muse has pictured true
And time has hallowed, greets the passer-by,
That, wild of shape, or beautiful of hue,
He gladly hails nor quits without a sigh:
For nature here has shed o'er earth and sky
Her loveliest tints, and freely scattered round
The wonders of her hand. O! hither fly,
Thou, who wouldst see; as on enchanted ground,
Her mighty charms unveiled and miracles abound.

XIII.

Ascend! where slopes Hymettus to the plain
And winds the pathway by the shady dell:
Though trod no more, though blood the herbage stain,
And by the hearth-stone rusts the shattered shell
That fired the roof, whose inmates vanquished fell
And left their bones unsepulchred, yet ne'er
Odors more sweet from beds of asphodel
Were poured at morn through Eden's gate, than there
From clefts in wild bloom clad float on the dewy air.

XIV.

Thence seaward look, on gay pavilion o'er
Whose crescent sports the pennon in the sun,
As forth, a motley myriad, they pour,
Turcman and Tartar, Arab, Moor and Hun:
And hark! the glen reverberates the gun
And deep tambour, whereat, in wild attire,
Like lightning glance from war-clouds wreathed and dun,
The bright-armed chivalry, whose battle-fire
Has swept the rebel ranks, from Tempe to Azire.

XV.

Little reck they but of the coming strife;
To scenes inured that early nurse the soul
To deeds of daring, scenes with peril rife,
And the wild liberty that spurns control.
Yet ready — should the drum its summons roll,
And blaze, fit emblem of their fiery zeal,
The crescent, streaming from its tented goal —
To prove that with no dubious faith they kneel,
A faith 't were well their foes less oft would preach than feel.

XVI.

The daylight fades o'er old Cyllene's hill,
And broad and dun the mountain shadows fall;
The stars are up and sparkling, as if still
Smiling upon their altars; but the tall
Dark cypress, gently, as a mourner, bends
— Wet with the drops of evening as with tears —
Alike o'er shrine and worshipper, and blends,
All dim and lonely, with the wrecks of years,
As of a world gone by no coming morning cheers.

XVII.

There sits the queen of temples¹ — gray and lone.
She, like the last of an imperial line,
Has seen her sister structures, one by one,
To time their Gods and worshippers resign;
And the stars twinkle through the weeds that twine
Their roofless capitals; and, through the night,
Heard the hoarse drum and the exploding mine,
The clash of arms and hymns of uncouth rite,
From their dismantled shrines the guardian powers affright.

¹ The Parthenon.

XVIII.

Go! thou, from whose forsaken heart are reft
 The ties of home; and, where a dwelling-place
 Not Jove himself the elements have left,
 The grass-grown, undefined arena pace!
 Look on its rent, though tower-like shafts,¹ and hear
 The loud winds thunder in their aged face;
 Then slowly turn thine eye, where moulders near
 A Cæsar's Arch,² and the blue depth of space
 Vaults like a sepulchre the wrecks of a past race.

XIX.

Is it not better with the Eremite,
 Where the weeds rustle o'er his airy cave,³
 Perched on their summit, through the long still night
 To sit and watch their shadows slowly wvae,
 — While oft some fragment, sapped by dull decay,
 In thunder breaks the silence, and the fowl
 Of Ruin hoots — and turn in scorn away
 Of all man builds, time levels, and the cowl
 Awards her moping sage in common with the owl?

¹ The Ruins of the Temple of Jupiter.

² The Triumphal Arch of Hadrian.

³ A ruinous hermitage planted on the entablature of these columns.

XX.

Or, where the palm, at twilight's holy hour,
By Theseus' Fane¹ her lonely vigil keeps —
Gone are her sisters of the leaf and flower,
With them the living crop earth sows and reaps.
But these revive not; the weed with them sleeps,
But clothes herself in beauty from their clay,
And leaves them to their slumber; o'er them weeps
Vainly the Spring her quickening dews away,
And Love as vainly mourns, and mourns, alas! for aye.

XXI.

Or, more remote, on Nature's haunts intrude,
Where since creation she has slept on flowers,
Wet with the noon-day forest-dew, and wooed
By untamed choristers in unpruned bowers:
By pathless thicket, rock that time-worn towers
O'er dells untrodden by the hunter, piled
Ere by its shadow measured were the hours
To human eye, the rampart of the wild,
Whose banner is the cloud, by carnage undefiled.

¹ The Theseum.

XXII.

The weary spirit that forsaken plods
The world's wide wilderness a home may find,
Here, mid the dwellings of long banished Gods
And thoughts they bring, the mourners of the mind;
The spectres that no spell has power to bind,
The loved, but lost, whose soul's life is in ours,
As incense in sepulchral urns, enshrined,
The sense of blighted or of wasted powers,
The hopes whose promised fruits have perished with their flowers.

XXIII.

There is a small low cape — there, where the moon
Breaks o'er the shattered and now shapeless stone;¹
The waters, as a rude but fitting boon,
Weeds and small shells have, like a garland, thrown
Upon it, and the wind's and wave's low moan
And sighing grass and cricket's plaint are heard
To steal upon the stillness, like a tone
Remembered. Here, by human foot unstirred,
Its seed the thistle sheds, and builds the ocean-bird.

¹ The remains of the tomb of Themistocles.

XXIV.

Lurks the foul toad, the lizard basks secure
Within the sepulchre of him whose name
Had scattered navies like the whirlwind. Sure,
If aught ambition's fiery wing may tame,
'T is here; the web the spider weaves where Fame
Planted her proud, but sunken shaft, should be
To it a fetter, — still it springs the same.
Glory's fool-worshipper! here bend thy knee!
The tomb thine altar-stone, thine idol Mockery:

XXV.

A small gray Elf, all sprinkled o'er with dust
Of crumbling catacomb and mouldering shred
Of banner and embroidered pall and rust
Of arms, time-eaten monuments, that shed
A cankered gleam on dim escutcheons, where
The groping antiquary pores to spy —
A what? a name — perchance ne'er graven there;
At whom the Urchin with his mimic eye
Sits peering through a skull and laughs continually.

XXVI.

But 't is enough. 'T were vain the pride to mock,
Though crushed, the relics of whose trophies strew
Like bones of Cyclopean mould, the rock
They pinnaced. Though Conquest, where it grew,
Has slaked its ashes with her crimson dew,
And o'er the spot her shadow Ruin flings,
The dust but sleeps they sepulchre. Renew,
Might of old days, your youth! the trumpet rings!
And Battle plumes his shaft and Victory her wings.

XXVII.

Hark! 't is the din of conflict. It has ceased,
And darkness seems the sudden strife to close.
Again, by hoofs, to which it thunders, prest,
The hollow earth shakes; roused from their repose
The wild flock scatters, and the column throws
Its shadow trembling on the plain, that, red
With the exploding rocket's glare, now shows
The sod with horse and horseman gasping spread —
On! till the cross float free from shore to mountain-head.

XXVIII.

The song is mute in Epicurus' shade,
And locked in Academe the Muse's well ;
Sage, sophist, each forever silent laid
Within his nameless and his narrow cell.
Dreamers ! but who the darkness shall dispel,
They strove with eye still baffled to explore, —
The shadowy bourne, whence none have come to tell
What life it is beyond that mystic shore ?
Enough ! the gulf expands, Death waits to waft us o'er.

XXIX.

Enough for us to know, we are ; and may
The mind by habit to the shocks inure
Of ills, that, though its tenement of clay
They shatter, leave it unimpaired, if sure
To spring, and with the element endure,
Whence brighter worlds shall into being leap,
An essence incorporeal and pure ;
And, if to perish, brief the pang and deep,
As sorrow, pain were not, the grave's untroubled sleep.

XXX.

And never more the voyager shall spy,—
Like guardian spirits watching through the night
His home-bound bark,—their bright forms greet his eye,
Shrines whose old relics heap their mouldered site.
And who the cross each old poetic sprite
Warn from her home but half regrets to see,—
But sighs, as still they seem from wood, or height,
Or dell, or thicket, weeping sent to flee,
To think that such things were, and are no more to be!

XXXI.

Phantoms, the mind's creations, yet of power
To cheer the spirit, that, beyond the bound
Of earth still borne, expatiates, as the flower
Springs sunward, though a nursling of the ground:
Till rose the star of brightness, to confound
Their airy being and the night dispel,
Wherein was heard no superhuman sound,
But Sorrow turned, with tear that vainly fell,
All hopeless from the grave where Love had sighed farewell.

XXXII.

The night wears late, and from her ancient bower
Owl chants to owl her solitary hymn ;
The dews are deepening and the place and hour,—
As now the Moon her crescent, pale and dim,
Withdraws from Heaven, and the Meteors shower
On high their vapoury and silent light,—
Descend with something of a spectral power
Upon my spirit ; for I stand where night,
Ruin and solitude speak but of vanished might.

XXXIII.

The might of Greece ! whose story has gone forth,
Like the eternal echo of a lyre
Struck by an angel, to the bounds of earth,
A marvel and a melody ; a fire
Unquenched, unquenchable. Castalia's choir
Mourn o'er their altars worshipless or gone ;
But the free mountain air they did respire
Has borne their music onward, with a tone
Shaking earth's tyrant race through every distant zone !

XXXIV.

A never dying music, borne along
The stream of years, that else were mute, and fraught
— A boundless echo, thunder pealed in song —
With the unconquerable might of thought:
The Titan that shall rive the fetters wrought
By the world's god, Opinion, and set free
The powers of mind, giants from darkness brought;
The trophies of whose triumph-march shall be
Thrones, dungeons swept away, as rampires by the sea.

XXXV.

Approach! but not thou favored one, thou light
And sportive insect, basking in the ray
Of youth and pleasure, heedless of the night.
Dreamer! the shapes that in thy pathway play,
Thy morning pathway, elsewhere chase! away!
Come not, till, like the fading weeds that twine
Yon time-worn capital, the thoughts, that prey
On hopes of high but baffled aim, decline,
And weary of the race the goal unwon resign.

XXXVI.

Is thy hearth desolate, or trod by feet
Whose unfamiliar steps recall no sound
Of such, as, in thine early days, to greet
Thy coming, hastened? are the ties that bound
Thy heart's hopes severed? hast thou seen the ground
Close o'er her, thy young love? and felt, for thee
That earth contains no other? look around!
Here thou may'st find companions:—hither flee!
Where Ruin dwells, and men, nay, gods have ceased to be!

XXXVII.

Wall, tower and temple crushed and heaped in one
Wide tomb, that echoes to the Tartar's cry
And drum heard rolling from the Parthenon,
The wild winds sweeping through it, owl's gray eye
Gleaming among its ruins, and the sigh
Of the long grass that unmolested waves,
The race whose proud old monuments are by
To mock, but not to shame them, recreants, slaves,
The very stones should arm heaped on heroic graves!

XXXVIII.

Here let me pause, and blend me with the things
That were,—the shadowy world, that lives no more
But in the heart's cherished imaginings,—
The mighty and the beautiful of yore.
It may not be: the mount, the plain, the shore,
Whisper no living murmur, voice nor tread,
But the low rustling of the leaves and roar
Of the dull ceaseless surf, and the stars shed
Their light upon the flower whose beauty mocks the dead.

XXXIX.

The Morn is up, with cold and dewy eye
Peeps, like a vestal from her cloister, forth,
In blushing brightness; the gray peaks on high
Lift her old altars in the clear, blue north;
The clouds ascend, on light winds borne, that come
Laden with fragrance; and from each high-place,
Where every god in turn has found a home,
Nature sends up her incense, and her face
Unveils to Him whose shrine and dwelling are all space.

XL.

Morn hushed as midnight! save perchance is heard
At times the hum of insect, or the grass
That sighs, or rustles by the lizard stirred:
And still we pause; and may, where empire was
And ruin is, no stone unheeded pass,—
No rude Memorial, that seems to wear
Vestige of that whose glory, as a glass
Shattered but still resplendent, lives,— and share
The spirit of the spot, the “dream of things that were.”

XLI.

Land of the free, of battle and the Muse!
It grieves me that my first farewell to thee
Should be my last: that, nurtured by the dews
Of thy pure fount, some blossoms from the tree,
Where many a lyre of ancient minstrelsy
Now silent hangs, I plucked, but failed to rear.
As 't is, a chance-borne pilgrim of the sea,
I lay them on thy broken altar here,
A passing worshipper, but humble and sincere.

TITANIA'S BANQUET,
A MASK.

Fairies in the wood,
By the green banks did sit.
Spencer.

TITANIA'S BANQUET.

SCENE, A PAVILION IN A FOREST.

Enter two Fairies.

SONG.

FIRST FAIRY.

O come to my bower
At the noontide hour,
And wait not for the moon;
O come where the wood-boughs drip and twine;
We have bees for pipers, dews for wine,
In the merry, merry month of June.

SECOND FAIRY.

Said the Fairy-Knight,
I am a sprite
Of the free and sunny air;
I cannot be your love, and dwell
Where the pale flowers weep and the cold founts well,
And your bower, where the owls hoot, share.

I am a spirit of the element,
 The light, and like not these your embower'd haunts,
 These leafy cloisters, whose pale nun, the shy,
 Cold wood-rose, ever weeps in her dank cell.
 The owl no more winks at a sunbeam here
 Than at a star at midnight.

FIRST FAIRY.

The toad slinks to her covert, and the gnat
 Gives o'er his hum. Some charm's abroad.

SECOND FAIRY.

If so,

The queen's at hand: these hushed portents are still
 Her harbingers.

FIRST FAIRY.

Yon star, that but now winked
 In the horizon, like a glow-worm on
 Some low moist bank—look! where it mounts and burns
 Bright o'er our heads.

SECOND FAIRY.

It is her torch-bearer.

Titania and her Train approach.

FIRST FAIRY.

She comes. A motley troop!

SECOND FAIRY.

A motley. One would think
She'd of their henchmen robbed the courts of all
The shadow-kings 'twixt here and Mariban.
There's one that wears a feather in his cap,
Plucked from the gray hood of a Lapland owl,—
Look! with a snow-flake on it. The bright shell,
Wherewith yon dwarf Elf bonnets his swart brow,
Is from a shoal of Muscat; and the robe,—
Spangled with gold and strung with small, white pearls,
The Spirit of the brown and buskin'd leg
Trails at his sunburnt knee,—was once the ear
Of a small mouse, that burrows in an isle
Washed by the Amazon.

FIRST FAIRY.

What's that she holds in a silken string? a beetle?

SECOND FAIRY.

The same. She bought him of a sailor from
The Cyclades, to be her trumpeter.
She prized him for his spots. The dolt! there's no
More music in his horn than in the bark
Of Scylla's sea-dogs. Yet he swears he has
Heard Phœbus sing, and into silence charmed
The harp of Memnon; nay, unsphered the Moon
To meet Endymion.

FIRST FAIRY.

The knave! he 'll thrive

At Court.

Enter, at one side, Titania and her train; at the other, Puck.

TITANIA.

Whence come you, Puck?

PUCK.

From gathering cockles by the shores of Ind.

TITANIA.

Met you with Oberon?

PUCK.

No, queen, nor did
I chance to hear of him: but if you 'll send
A messenger to Ormus, to the girl,
The Arab fisherman's daughter,—her that sits
By the sea-side and like a mermaid sings,
Braiding her dark locks with small golden coins,
Stamped with strange legends and the images
And superscriptions of old eastern kings,—
Belike you 'll find him sleeping in her lap.

FAIRY.

Within a green plat of the wood,
An aged, withered oak there stood,

Like a hermit, gray and lone,
Breathing forth his orison,
Or a wizard near the centre
Of whose dread round nothing may venture,
A withered leaf was, here and there,
Heard, at times, to twirl in air, —
All beside was still and bare.
Rank the grass beyond it grew,
On each blade a drop of dew ;
But, where in the cold moon's ray
Dim and jagg'd its shadow lay,
Grass nor grew, nor dew was sprinkled,
Sprite nor tripped, nor glow-worm twinkled.
There saw I the Elfin king
Sleeping in a fairy-ring —

TITANIA.

What spirit have we here, an Ethiop ?
He has the brow of one.

PUCK.

Your Majesty, I found him in a grot
By the Dead Sea. I questioned him of whence
And what he was ; whereat he shook his head,
And with his sooty finger pressed his lip.
He makes no answer, but points to the shore ;
Arrived at which, I heard a low, strange voice,

As of a sea-nymph singing in her cave;
And looking down, a thousand feet below
The surface of the water, roofs discovered,
Columns and battlements and pavements strewn
With gems and gold and sea-weeds intermixed,
Lit up by subterranean fires and lamps,
Of subtle naphtha: sitting by which a Sprite,
In likeness of a Nereid, from a book
Chanted strange symbols. I had heard the tale
Of Sodom and Gomorrah,— how they were
Destroyed by fire and in the Dead Sea sunk
With all their treasures,— and, from that and what
I saw, inferred their ruins were the haunts
Of spirits, powers that sway the elements
Of fire and water, and that she I heard
Muttered some charm of virtue to withhold
Their submarine dominions from the grasp
Of hostile demons, that might else invade
Them for their riches. With a pearl, I found
Upon the sands of the Arabian sea,
I bribed this fairy, as I deem he is,
To join my troop; not doubting but he might
Be tempted, by the pleasures of our court,
To exchange for them the sullen life he led
In sultry waters and the oozy halls
Of sunken cities, and in time disclose

The secret of the charm that guards their treasures.
They call him Asphalt.

TITANIA.

Is your troop ready?

PUCK.

They are sleeping, queen.
Black and white Elves, brown and gray,
You are summoned! Elves, obey!
Come from crevice, nook and hole,
Lily-cup and cell of mole,
Bower and bank of moss-turf green,
At the bidding of our queen.

TITANIA.

Fairies, know that we do expect to-night,
To grace our revelry, a puissant spirit,
Who sways the sceptre of an orient king,
One of the fam'd enchanters that of old,
By the Euphrates and the Tigris, saw
Their proud seats pinnacled amid the clouds.
He, as it chanced, with all his palaces,
His subjects, treasures, children, wives, was by
An earthquake swallowed, long before the flood.
Thus buried, his seat of empire is
Fathoms below the deep sea-bed, possess

By this same spirit, or, as he is styled,
Prince of the Gnomes, the swart elves whose haunts are
The unhewn chambers of the rock, the deep
And sunless caverns. Him I would receive
With all due form, seeing he doubtless deems
Us, who these wild and wooded walks frequent,
Strangers to the imperial pomp, the gold,
The gems and syrups, that endow the East.
Therefore mark well my bidding, nor alone
Mark, but see done, with speed that shall outstrip
The lightning.

FIRST FAIRY.

The solid earth to us is as a shadow.

SECOND FAIRY.

We'll dart through it as sunbeams do through air.

TITANIA.

I would have all things rare and delicate:
Wines in old jars, stamped with the seals of kings
Whose bones are dust; liquors in crystal cups,
Whose blush would shame the morning's, and whose sparkle
Dim the tear she lets fall upon the rose,
Or the dissolved pearl that Cleopatra
Drank to Mark Anthony.

ASPHALT.

I know of such,
That have so long been buried in the vaults
Of inhumed cities, they would drink the light
As sands do water.

TITANIA.

Spices I'll have from Ceylon, such as scent
The sea-air for a thousand leagues; incense
Of gums of Afric, sweeter than the lip
Of Cupid moist with Cytherea's kiss,
Or Hebe's sprinkled by the cup of Jove;
Fruits from all climes within the signs that bound
The sun's march, ripening on their branches, brought
In vases moulded of transparent earth;
Syrups of Hybla and the bags of bees
That thrid the alleys of Cashmere. Away!

[Exeunt Puck and his troop.]

FAIRY.

Shall we have music?

TITANIA.

Music? such as shall
Unsphere the Pleiades.

FAIRY.

I know a bower — it is in Thessaly,

Where the Athenian with the nightingale
In singing strove and broke her heart. There do
The wing'd musicians at this hour resort,
Startling the midnight silence till each leaf
Seems a melodious tongue. Thither will I,
And so bewitch them with a song I heard
A star sing to a Mermaid as she lay,
Her white arm floating like a moonbeam on
The still sea-wave, that they shall hither flock
Like Tritons to the shell of Proteus.

SONG.

My couch is not where the wood-boughs drip
In the noontide shade, but I lie,
When day is done,
'Neath a curtain spun
Of the mist of the sunset sky.
The moon's cold ray
Is not my day,
But I wake as fades the star,
The winking light
That follows the night
O'er the green sea-isles afar.

[*Exit Fairy.*]

TITANIA.

My subtle minister, you've power to shape
The elements.

ASPHALT.

I have ; what would the queen ?

TITANIA.

Rear me a palace, straight, whose pride shall shame
All we have heard of Babylonian bowers,
Of Memphian columns and the pictured domes
Of Mongul capitals ; wherein to dwell
The gods would quit Olympus and the souls
Elysium.

Palace rises to the sound of subterranean music.

FAIRY.

O ! glorious ! the airy vault of Heaven,
Sprinkled at midnight with ten thousand stars,
Is not more lustrous than this lamp-lit dome ;
The columns are of gold and ivory,
The capitals of sparkling stones, that show
Like tops of clouds at sunset.

TITANIA.

What trump is that ?

ASPHALT.

The Prince's. I should know
His flourish, since full many a time it has
At midnight summoned me. 'T is of a shell .

That once was blown before the argosy
Of a sea-king of Oman.

FAIRY.

Look! this way
He comes, preceded by a sooty troop,
Whose pennons, by their lurid torches lit,
Seem shreds of antique banners dim with rust.

FAIRY.

A sooty, truly; but sparkling with gems
As does the night with stars.

Enter the Prince and his train.

TITANIA.

Welcome to fairy-land! You see not here
The wealth and pomp of orient courts; and yet
To excuse our entertainment were to seem
To task your courtesy.

PRINCE.

Thanks! gentle queen. This palace were a home
For proud Semiramis. True it is that we
Inherit the once gorgeous halls of kings,
Wherein they sat, each like a sun within
The glorious awning of an evening cloud;
But they are such no more. The imagery

On the stained roofs of their long buried domes,
Is dim with subterranean damp and lit,
As graves by tomb-lamps, by the dull, cold rays
Of lurid torches by nepenthe fed;
And all the rich embroidery, wherewith
Their walls were decked, is now but hanging shreds
The air that 's moved but by an insect's wing
Would shake to dust. The carved flowers that wreathed
Their lofty capitals are cropped by time;
And mouldered bones the pavement strew, that once
The looms of Persia did conspire to deck,
In colors richer than the scarf of Iris.
Their wines, their goblets, gems and gold, are ours;
But seldom do we breathe the upper air
And gaze upon the vault, beneath whose light
You nightly hold your sprightly revels.

TITANIA.

Minstrels, strike up!

Table rises to the sound of music, with nymphs as attendants.

FIRST FAIRY.

The wine that sparkles in yon crystal cups
Is liquid ruby!

SECOND FAIRY.

Its foam liquid pearl!

ASPHALT.

'T is from a jar stamped with the seal of queen
Semiramis—of the kind wherewith
She made her lovers drunk, then slew them.

FAIRY.

The mortal that with it dares but to wet
His lip, deserves to die. 'T is for the gods.
I'd pawn my immortality for but
Three drops of it.

As the banquet proceeds, enter Puck and Oberon.

OBERON. *To Puck.*

You see this flower. I plucked it from the root
Of a Cimmerian hemlock. It was ne'er
Touched by a sunbeam. The cold dew, that's in
Its speckled cup, fell in the moon's eclipse
From a dead leaf of nightshade.
Take it, and, when their mirth is highest, shake
The dew from it into the charmed air,
And, like a dream from the vex'd sleeper's eye
Woke by a thunderclap, these conjured shapes
Of pillars, viands, and attendant nymphs—
Will, in an instant, vanish into nothing.

[Exit Puck.]

OBERON.

Ha! bravely done!

Palace and attendants vanish.

TITANIA.

This is some trick of Puck and Oberon.

PRINCE.

The moon is setting, and the cock has thrice
Warned the night-goblin to his earthy bed,
And roused the day-star, that anon will thrust
His torch into the morning's chamber. We must
Away.

TITANIA.

A ship lies in a neighboring port: the crew
I've drugged with poppy. Will it please you to
Embark in her? If so, I have a sprite
Whose song has power to set the ocean flowing,
As 'twere a brook, and loose the hurricane.
You'll not refuse? — We'll with you to the strand.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to the deck of a ship under sail.

SONG OF THE ELFIN STEERSMAN.

One elf, I trow, is diving now
For the small pearl; and one,
The honey-bee for his bag he
Goes chasing in the sun:

And one, the knave, has pilfered from
The Nautilus his boat,
And takes his idle pastime where
The water-lilies float.

And some the mote, for the gold of his coat,
By the light of the will-o'wisp follow ;
And others, they trip where the alders dip
Their leaves in the watery hollow ;
And one is with the fire-fly's lamp
Lighting his love to bed ;—
Sprites, away ! elf and fay,
And see them hither sped.

Haste ! hither whip them with this end
Of spider's web — anon
The ghost will have fled to his grave-bed,
And the bat winked in the sun.
Haste ! for the ship till the moon dip
Her horn I did but borrow ;
And crowing cocks are fairy clocks,
That mind us of the morrow.

The summer moon will soon go down,
And the day-star dim her horn ;
O blow, then, blow, till not a wave
Leap from the deep unshorn :

Blow, sweep their white tops into mist,
As merrily we roam,
Till the wide sea one bright sheet be,
One sheet of fire and foam.

Blow, till the sea a bubble be,
And toss it to the sky, —
Till the sands we tread of the ocean-bed,
As the summer fountain's, dry.
The upper shelves are ours, my elves,
Are ours, and soon the nether
With sea-flowers we shall sprinkled see,
And pearls like dew-drops gather.

The summer moon will soon go down,
And then our course is up;
Our frigate then, the cockle-shell —
Our boat, the bean-flower-cup.
Sprites, away! elf and fay,
From thicket, lake and hollow;
The blind bat, look! flits to his nook,
And we must quickly follow.

Ha! here they come, skimming the foam,
A gallant crew; but list!
I hear the crow of the cock — O blow,
Till the sea-foam drift like mist.

Fairies, haste! flood and blast
Quickly bring, and stay
The moon's horn—look! to his nook
The blind bat flits—away!

[Spirits vanish.]

LYRICAL PIECES.

LYRICAL PIECES.

LEILA.

When first you look upon her face,
You little note beside
The timidity, that still betrays
The beauties it would hide:
But, one by one, they look out from
Her blushes and her eyes;
And still the last, the loveliest —
Like stars from twilight skies.

And thoughts go sporting through her mind,
Like children among flowers;
And deeds of gentle goodness are
The measure of her hours.
In soul or face, she bears no trace
Of one from Eden driven;
But, like the rainbow, seems, though born
Of earth, a part of Heaven.

"THE TIME IS GONE."

The time is gone, forever gone, of happiness on earth;
And some in wine a solace find, and some in song and mirth:
The spirit of my lighter hours and kinder thoughts is one,
On whom to look is still to love, and love but her alone.

Her cheek still shows the blowing rose, as delicately o'er
The leaves that spread there still is shed some tint unspied
before:

And each the fairest seems, and yet, a fleeting light, when past,
There comes some new and gentle hue more lovely than the last.

Her faintest tone is heard alone mid many sweet, and he,
That is a stranger to her words, is so to melody,—
To words that, springing from her lips, like singing birds from
flowers,
Seem music wed to fragrance shed by roses after showers.

An eye, whose light has more, though bright, of softness than
of mirth,
Where still some gentle feeling tells the moment of its birth.
You do not blend her image with the shapes of earth but Heaven,
Or if not, with imaginings to which their hues are given.

The being of a world all fair, that poetry has stored
With pictures of all lovely things by memory adored ;
This song to her! for had a soul like hers the tempter tried,
Earth still a paradise had been, and she its fairest bride.

TO A JEWESS OF MYTELENE.

There's beauty, though the light they shed
Beam darkly, in thy cheek and eye, —
The beauty that, when day has fled,
Is imaged in the starry sky.
Though richest gems thy brow entwine,
Half-hidden by its braided tress,
To me they but unheeded shine,
While gazing on thy loveliness.

That downcast eye, that placid cheek,
So softly fair — the shaded rose —
And low and quiet tones, but speak
Of gentle passions in repose ;
A mind with God and man at peace,
Like waters gliding calm at even,
And blending, in their quiet face,
The softer tints of earth and Heaven.

"LADY, TILL THEE I BADE FAREWELL."

Lady, till thee I bade farewell,
 I little deemed remembrance o'er
 One feeling would regret to dwell,
 At parting from my native shore.
 But who may on thee gaze, nor feel,
 Feel, with a sigh, the hope were vain,
 The wish, that time or change should steal
 Thy image from his heart and brain.

And yet 't is not with joy I gaze
 On one so innocent and fair ;
 Pity looks forward to the days
 Of blighted hope or wasting care.
 Sure there are things that we regret
 Were born, if not in youth to die ;
 We would prolong their stay, and yet
 Feel that their home is in the sky.

Lady, I go where roams the bee
 Forever on through summer skies,
 And isles are sprinkled o'er the sea
 Like remnants of a paradise.

But what are scenes the mind may dress,
Yet nature fairer paints, to me?
Skies, fruits and flowers — their loveliness
Will but remind my heart of thee —

Will but remind me, with a sigh,
Of hours as innocent as thine;
A half regret, that they, since I
May not recall them, e'er were mine.
Our ship flies fast; a single star
Shines on her dark and troubled way;
And such thine image, lone and far,
Along the path of memory.

MOORISH RUINS.

What dost thou here, thou lovely flower?
 The beautiful and brave
 Are silent, now, in this lone tower;
 Go! wither o'er their grave!
 Wall rent and moss-grown turrets moan,
 And weed-clad arches sigh:
 For thee too sadly deep the tone
 That speaks of times gone by.

Go! twine thee with the ivy-plant,
 That decks the brow of mirth;
 The lonely images, that haunt
 These halls, are not of earth:
 The voice of song has with the wind
 Of other times past on,
 And thou art left to bloom behind
 In loveliness alone.

So from the past, the waste of thought
 And feeling, haply springs
 Some hope, with bright remembrance fraught,
 To which the future clings, —

A flower that blooms not, but where blight
And desolation dwell,—
A star that but reveals the night
Its beam may not dispel.

"FILL NOT FOR ME THE CUP WITH WINE."

Fill not for me the cup with wine—

It sparkles like thine eye;

For me no wreath of roses twine—

They breathe but of thy sigh:

But pledge me in Oblivion's wave,

And I will drink to thee;

And let the wreath you weave me, of

A sleepy fragrance be.

Of night-blown poppies weave the wreath,

With dews of Lethe wet;

For though 't is sweet to think of thee,

'T were sweeter to forget:

It is not wine that can efface

Thy image from my brain;

But pledge me in Oblivion's wave,

And I the cup will drain.

SONG OF LIBERTY,

SUGGESTED BY CERTAIN PROCEEDINGS IN 1835.

*Nobilitas sola virtus.**Juvenal.*

Rouse! let the petty tyrants know,
Whose feeble hands would link your chain,
The might of Freedom sleeps not, though
It unexerted long has lain;
That Freedom's flag, though now 't is furled,
Once more may guide her battle-flame;
That Freedom's step shall shake the world,
Ere she renounce her birthright claim.

Not thus the Roman, Greek, of old,
The chain of bondage tamely wore;
The Switzer, in his mountain hold,
The Briton, by his sea-beat shore:
Not thus your sires, when king and slave
Would lord it o'er your own green land,
The storm of conflict shrank to brave—
A small, but free and fearless band.

They waited not for trump and drum
 To bid them to the conflict press,
 But stepped forth from their forest-home,
 Like lions from the wilderness; —
 Their rights to claim in words, that woke
 The coward to a sense of wrong;
 If words should fail, to wield the stroke
 Of Freedom's sword and shout her song.

And can ye, then, with folded arms,
 Look tamely on, and see the herd, —
 Whose heart no spark of feeling warms,
 No high-souled impulse ever stirred, —
 See them, the proud, yet craven crew,
 Laugh at your threats and spurn your plea?
 Slaves! if ye can, and live, adieu
 To valor, virtue, liberty!

TO A WITHERED ROSE FROM THE BANKS OF
THE MELES.¹

Thou mind'st me where the wild flowers droop,
The nook, whence, by the willowy shore,
I chose thee from a nymph-like group,
The Dian rose of four :

The morning, when by banks I strayed
The oleander made one flower,
And spied thee dripping in their shade,
A Naiad in her bower :

With dewy, downcast eye, and cheek
That half a blush disclosed, a thing
Betwixt a bud and blossom, meek
Young sister of the spring :

With breath, that had betrayed unspied
Thy lurking-place, tempting the bee,
In search of other sweets, aside
To steal a kiss from thee ;

¹ A River near Smyrna.

And me, as, shrinking at my feet,
 Thy dewy eye looked up to mine,
 To leave thee to thy mossy seat,
 And canopy of vine.

Go! relic of a scentless wreath!
 Bid her, to whom I send thee, o'er
 Thy dead leaf sigh, and it will breathe
 More sweetly than before.

LINES WRITTEN AT SEA.

The stars through falling dews, that steep
The shades of twilight, faintly shine ;
And, if they weep not, seem to weep
In silence o'er the day's decline :
O'er hues, that, though they fast decay
And set in darkness, soon return ;
But who for me, when gone for aye,
Will mourn, nay, who will seem to mourn ?

Perchance, upon a desert shore,
The sands shall heap my stoneless grave ;
Perchance, above me, heedless roar
The thunder of the ocean-wave ;
The wind, whose voice its breakers mock,
Bear my last sigh unheard away, —
The shadow of the mountain-rock
Forbid a flower to deck my clay.

And yet, — since none will smile the less,¹
When I am gone, — the ocean-foam,
The column of the wilderness,
The sea-rock, were my fitting tomb.

¹ None that, —
If we were not, would seem to smile the less. — *Byron.*

My life yon orb, on which I gaze,
 May image well—lone, dim and far ;
 And death to me will be but as
 The setting of that nameless star.

TO THE MEMORY OF A YOUNG LADY.

Few are the dead the living mourn ;
And thousands owe to pride
The monument that decks the turf
Oblivion else would hide :
The lov'd like thee we see not pass
From earth unwept away ;
But tears their pale, cold relics steep,
As dews the close of day.

The offerings at thy grave should be
Things beautiful but frail, —
Sad tokens, flowers that half-blown die
And buds untimely pale ;
And dews of summer, soon exhaled,
When brightest ever fleetest ;
And broken music, sprightly sounds
Of strains that cease when sweetest.

A spirit of the gentle kind,
'T would seem, at times is sent,
That Heaven may more revered be,
And earth more innocent ;

Of lighter essence, ever bent
From earthly bonds to spring;
As Faith to thee her eye had lent,
And hope to thee, her wing.

Yet wanting not — a flower of earth
Though blossoming in air —
The sympathies that human joys
And human sorrows share;
Nor sportive fancies, feelings light
But innocent, and words,
Whose tones express but happiness,
Like songs of morning birds.

Unfortunate! so soon to die,
If not so fitted for
The life that knows no sorrow, day
No cloud shall darken more:
Like to the bright and starry sign,¹
We nightly see arise,
And shine above the mists of earth,
A daughter of the skies.

It is not that the tribute here
Of humble flowers I twine,
All frail and scentless as they are,
Befit a soul like thine.

¹ The Constellation of the Virgin.

Tombs are but dust ; but thou, ——
The heart thy sepulchre shall be,
Where lies thine image, mourned by Love
And watched by Memory.

TO VIOLETS.

Fair flowerets! ye are laughing now,
 Born for a little while;
 So short-lived, and of footstep shy,
 Had mine not hither strayed, no eye
 Had seen you bloom and smile.
 I joy to meet you in my walk,
 So daintily arrayed;
 And yet, 't is not without a sigh,
 To think how soon ye fade;
 Frail infants of the Spring,
 That play
 In her green lap awhile,
 Then pass away.

It were some comfort, might ye know
 Ye are so fresh and fair,
 That now unseen, unscented blow,
 Save by the sun and air—
 Or one like me. The world, alas!
 Your beauty will unheeded pass,

So heedless of the volume spread,
The poetry—where'er we tread—
By Nature, they not even look
On you, the pictures of her book.

Laugh while ye may! ere night, I fear,
Your blossoms will be shed:
'T will grieve me, in my early walk,
To come and find you dead.
So weary of a life unstaid,
So long I've watched you, flowers, so long,
At morning and the even-song,
Ye in my path have played,
Like younger sisters, that I feel
A sadness o'er my spirit steal
At parting, and could almost pray
We might together pass away.

TO A FLOWER FROM THE ATHENIAN ACROPOLIS.

Frail, withered leaf! thy tints are shed —
 Thine odor scents a distant air ;
 No spirit here survives the dead,
 And seems to say, "The relic spare!"
 Around me flowers in sunshine sleep,
 Whose dewy sweets arrest the bee,
 Or blushing at my window peep ;
 Yet do I turn from them to thee.

For thou wast cradled, nurtured, where
 The men, whose birth was Freedom's, rose ;
 There still survive their trophies ; there
 The bones of heroes, Gods repose :
 Memorial of feelings high
 As met the mount my awe-struck gaze,
 Whose relics, though in dust they lie,
 Bespeak the pride of former days.

Prized, in remembrance of a spot,
 Whose time-worn image haunts me still ;
 For who has marked, and e'er forgot
 The trophies of that glorious hill ?

Still, though in shattered pride, elate,
But soon to perish, like the flower
Sprung from the dust that strews the seat,
The monuments of human power.

THE MARINER'S ADIEU.

Our pennant glitters in the breeze,
 And merry men are we,
 Where wind may blow, or billow flow —
 No limits to the free!
 No limits to the free! my boys,
 As now, 'twixt sea and sky,
 — The white wave curling in her wake —
 Our good ship seems to fly.

One mute farewell, one look, as, where
 The blue sky meets the foam,
 Headland and isle fast fade the while,
 Then proudly greet our home!
 Then proudly greet our home! my boys,
 My merry men and true,
 Where wind may roam, or billow foam,
 — Our native land, adieu!

THE BATTLE OF SAN JACINTO.

'T is done! the sword is once more sheathed,
So nobly drawn in valor's cause;
And Texas sees her soil bequeathed
To freeborn men and equal laws;—
Bequeathed by those, who, whether they
As victors or as vanquished fell,
Have left a deathless memory,
A spirit that no might may quell.

The monuments of Freedom are
The names of such: the scroll decays;
Nor less will time the marble spare,
Where fame records their deeds and praise:
The names of those, whose swords have won—
Redeemed the green sod where they lie,
Transmitted still from sire to son,
From heart to heart, can never die.

And by their graves, in years to come,—
Where firm they stood, or rushed to greet,
With shouts, the foeman's trump and drum,
He never more shall wind or beat,—

Shall dwell a race, untaught to bow
To tyrant power, a race whose hands
Shall bear the flag, whose free folds now
In triumph float, to other lands.

And there the sire, as the plough turns
Some warlike relic from the sod,
Whose mould the battle-ranks inurns,
That few, but fearless, "blood-shod strode,"
Shall from it shake the dust, and to
The stripling turn and proudly say,
"Here, firm we stood — there, fell the foe —
On Texas' independence day."

Shout for the yet surviving brave!
Weep! for the brave who bled or fell,
Where Texas' green savannas wave,
Her hills and forests proudly swell;
For Houston and his gallant band,
The men whose blood was freely shed,
And him¹ whose cry, as from his hand
The death-blade dropped, was, "Go AHEAD!"

¹ Col. Orockett.

STANZAS WRITTEN IN AUTUMN AT PIRÆUS.

Around me are the relics, time
Dismantles, column wrecked and tower,
O'er which the weeds, that fading climb
Or withered droop, their dead leaves shower.
I look forth upon shore and sea,
Dim, distant isles and cloudless skies;
And all is lone, as it should be,
Where Ruin dwells and Nature dies.

I hear the plover whistling wild
O'er hills by summer suns imbrowned;
I hear the wind, with whisper mild,
Its farewell fragrance breathe around.
The lizard through the long dry fern
Darts rustling; and her dewy pall
The spider spreads o'er rifled urn,
O'er leafless brake and prostrate wall.

I note the few and pale red flowers,
That loiter by the green hill-side;
Unprized their sweets—the bee to bowers
And fields of richer bloom has hied.

I see their cups with cold showers wet ;
 And feel, the fading wreath they twine
 For Autumn's brow, so few as yet
 My joyous hours, were meet for mine.

By bank and brake the bird flits lone,
 With fitful note, no longer glad :
 Like his, my early mates are gone ;
 Like his, my song is low and sad :
 The tones that linger on my ear,
 And fain would speak of former mirth,
 Accord not with the dying year ;
 The thoughts are cold that gave them birth.

Gray towers and trees, that sighing wave,
 Untimely of your tresses shorn !
 'T is well that we by summer's grave
 Together meet, together mourn :
 Her frail bequest, the pale flowers, she
 At parting strews by fount and fell ;
 — But these revive : there waits for me
 The night, no quickening suns dispel.

NOBILITY.

Go! then, to heroes, sages if allied,
Go! trace the scroll, but not with eye of pride,
Where Truth depicts their glories as they shone,
And leaves a blank where should have been your own.

Mark the pure beam on yon dark wave imprest;
So shines the star on that degenerate breast—
Each twinkling orb, that burns with borrowed fires,—
So ye reflect the glory of your sires.

THE INDIAN'S LAMENT.

Here dwelt my tribe: these wooded hills, these grassy plains
were ours, —

This forest, with its fruits and game, its rivulets and flowers:
'T will fall before the white man's stroke, like my own ban-
ished race,

Nor tree nor stone be left to mark our home or burial-place.

The rifle, where the arrow of the hunter whistled, rings;
Where by the -wood his dwelling stood the grass untrodden
springs:

Beneath his hearth-stone breeds the snake, and weeds above it
grow,

And from his grave the bones are raked and scattered by the
plough.

A free-born race beside me grew — brave sons they were, and
tall, —

I saw them by the white man's stroke, as trees in blossom, fall;
And here, a withered oak, I stand, whose leaf has long been
shed,

That, though it feebly battle with the wind, at heart is dead.

Cold are our hearth-stones, desolate, their smoke has past away ;
Moss-grown they moulder by the lake where quenched their
 brands decay :
But let us go!—to woods untamed the wolf and panther flee ;
The white man's home is for the slave, the red man's for the
 free.

TO A MIGRATING SEA-BIRD.

As now thy solitary flight
I faintly trace on high,
— A speck, a mist that melts in light,
Upon the sunset sky —
Seen from that lone and dizzy height,
The dwindled forest to thy sight
Shows like a shrub; the glen,
Like one of all its many flowers;
Cities, like molehills; peaks, like towers;
And sure, like emmets, men.

High, higher still, till the gone sun
Gleam on thy passing wing,
As now the shadows, deeply dun,
Come down, I see thee spring:
But thou the point hast reached, at last,
Whence the sure path, by instinct traced,
Thou clearly canst espy,
To stream or lake, of reedy shore,
Where haply thou hast built before,
And heard thy ducklings cry.

There choose thy mate and nurse thy brood ;
Nor hawk nor man molest
Thy quiet haunt, till, on some eve
Like this, they quit their nest :
By savage Cola's bleak recess,
That to the hunter bars ingress,
And suns of sultry beam ;
Or, where the water-lily sleeps,
Rustles the reed, the alder weeps,
By Lena's lakes and stream.

Lone bird ! a happy lot hast thou —
An empire kings might envy — now
Pitching thy reedy tent
By summer cove or lake ; now high,
In company with Liberty,
A winged emigrant.

A free, blithe wanderer of air,
Of joy or grief thou tak'st no care,
Save of the passing one ;
The future, past, alike unspied,
All memory would vainly hide,
And fear as vainly shun.

The graves, beneath thy roving wing,
Of former mate or nursling, bring

No tear into thine eye;
But thy affections still, though they
Their objects win, unwept decay,
And ,unregretted die.

"BRING ME A BRIGHT, A STAINLESS SHELL."

*Ἀρίστον νόμον.**Pindar.*

Bring me a bright, a stainless shell,
That murmurs of the ocean-wave;
And fill it with the drops that well
From some old haunted fountain-cave—
To her! whose brow would blush to wear
The Teian wreath, a draught from high,
By earth though treasured, born of air,
The wine whose Hebe is the sky!

The cup is here and rightly filled,
That I would drain to love and thee;
And here are flowers, whose dews distilled
From skies of summer, soon will flee.
Put by the rose—'t will ever breathe,
In fancy, of the Teian bowl—
And crown thee with the lily-wreath;
'T is spotless as thy virgin soul.

EARLY SPRING.

As yet, no boughs with foliage bend,
 Nor buds to blossoms shoot;
 But withered leaves their rustling blend
 With the blithe blue-bird's note.
 He comes, the messenger of Spring,
 With his glad minstrelsy,
 And bearing in his herald wing
 The tincture of her sky.

Soon, as before, fresh dew and flowers
 Shall strew the lap of May;
 How unlike gone and happier hours,
 That bid farewell for aye!
 Sweet minstrel! doubly sweet, might I
 Like thee those hours forget;
 As 't is, I listen with a sigh,
 A feeling of regret.

THE GRAVE OF WOOD, THE ARTIST.

As here, beside thy humble grave, I stand and mark the spot,
Where wild weeds unmolested wave and genius sleeps forgot,
I feel, thy low, unhonored place of rest thus lone to see,
That I, though long unused to weep, a tear have left for thee.

I met thee in thy noon of life, and enviable state
Of fame, a height which few aspired to reach or emulate:
Art worshipped, soul was imaged in the shapes thy pencil
wrought —
The wizard, at whose bidding, light and shade embodied thought.

Those days are gone, forever gone, to thee, and here I stand,
No more to greet thy friendly smile or grasp thy friendly hand;
To feel I ne'er shall meet thy like, and turn in scorn away
From monumental earth to that which tombless heaps thy clay.

The hand, at whose creative touch to life the tablet springs,
The sympathies, that, like the air, embrace all living things,
And Music, at whose tone comes Mirth with Pity at her side,—
These were thy own, the children of thy soul, and with thee
died.

True 't is, that passions prone to err — as plants of blighting
power
May warp and waste yet not forbid the trunk they twine to
tower —
Mised the aim, repressed the growth, of virtues, powers of
mind,
That, thus impaired, but marked thy lot as that of human kind.

O let not him with heart untried, who ne'er has sat a guest
At pleasure's feast, nor felt a wish by reason unrepres't,
Recall thy failings, careless eye the sod that shrouds thy sleep,
And hides too much for virtue there to pause and not to weep.

Age came, strength failed, hope fled, and he was left in want
to die,
Whose life had been one act, whose hand, one fount of charity;
To vexing ills, that piecemeal sap the props of life, a prey: —
The rock the earthquake may withstand, but yields to slow
decay.

The Roman¹ fell, forsaken and betrayed, upon a shore,
Where he had sought repose, and deemed life's fiercer ills were
o'er.

His fate was thine; but to his name the column tower we see,—
A lasting honor, though a late; and such we owe to thee.

¹ Pompey.

THE REVEL.

On! time, with flying footsteps press!

Let music breathe and wine-cup flow,

As hours were years, and happiness

A dweller, not a guest, below;

As revel's night were ne'er to close,

And sorrow had, for cheeks that bloom

And beaming eyes that mock repose,

No tear in store, and earth no tomb.

As yet the dewy day-star sleeps:

No rest! till woke, as moonlight flies,

On faded cheeks it coldly peeps,

On weary feet and watching eyes.

No rest! enough, that day-beams bright

To hours of care and toil belong;

The moon, the stars, the flowers of night,

Were made for mirth, for love and song.

'T is well: and yet thou art not here;

And yet, from lips that loveliest shine

And fondest speak, I seem to hear

The tones and greet the blush of thine.

But no! my thoughts are far away;
 And though, where all around are glad,
 I seem to smile, my words betray
 That thou art lone and I am sad.

TO A COIN FOUND ON THE PLAINS OF TROY.

Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee.

Hamlet.

And thou art here, about whose name and date
'T were idle e'en to hazard a conjecture;
Perhaps, when Troy was in her palmy state,
Struck to commemorate some feat of Hector;
Perhaps, coëval with the days of Jubal,
Graved by that Cain whose cognomen was Tubal.

Were thy impress and legend visible,
Thou might'st, 't is true, prove but, when all is said,
A button, by some bush from Spon or Gell¹
Filched, when in search of the Scamander's head:
As 't is, thou may'st have borne the monogram
Of some old Sheik anterior to Ham.

Time-eaten relic! within whose dim round
The memories of by-gone ages dwell,
Like shapes sepulchral disinhumed and bound
Within the magic ring by wizard spell!
Thou cabinet of shadowy portraits, glass,
Wherein the phantoms of dead empires pass!

¹ The travellers.

Rome, Carthage, Tyre, those war-ships on the tide
 Of time, are now as they had never been;
 Their battle-ensigns, that had earth defied,
 Ages ago were struck, and piecemeal seen
 Into its dark, Lethean waves to drop;
 While thou, a bubble, floatest at their top.

Thy fellow-bubbles, — Cæsars, Caliphs, Sophies,
 Kings, Consuls, Tribunes, Moguls, Magi, Sages,
 All who have left to dust their bones and trophies,
 And names — where not misspelt — to after ages,
 The lions, *ne plus ultras* of their day,
 The marvels, Trismegisti, — where are they?

Where Thot, where Cheops, Ninus, Babel's founder,
 And he, who saw the Mede his palace raze,
 — Of Daniel's text a practical expounder —
 And turn him out, a human ox, to graze?
 With many more, of old and modern story, —
 Jew, Gentile, Greek, Barbarian, Whig and Tory?

Where was thy birth-place, thy primeval bed?
 Did Kaff infold thee in his rocky vest?
 Or wast thou shaken by the thunder's tread
 From Gebel Tar¹ — a jewel from his crest,
 Tried in some now extinct volcano's fire? —
 Or brought from Ophir, in a ship of Tyre?

¹ Gibraltar.

What transmigrations hast thou undergone,
As coin, ring, bracelet, buckle, broach or chalice?
How oft been cheaply lost, or dearly won;
Yet still a welcome guest in hut or palace?
For doubtless thou hast travelled long and far,
Ere rags were cashed or promises at par.

Thou may'st, when Sodom was destroyed by fire,
Have melted from the ear of some rich beauty;
Or, as a string to Theban Memnon's lyre,
Or royal Nimrod's hunting bow, done duty;
Or, brought at Aaron's bidding, helped to mould
The statue of a God — the calf of gold.

Thou may'st, with Cadmus into Greece have come,
Or been a link in Cecrop's coat of mail;
Ulysses may have filched thee from his chum,
Or Homer pawned thee for a pot of ale —
Whose epic rhapsody too much of slaughter
Smacks, to have been a nursling of cold water.

Or was Troy but — as some deem is proved fully —
A dream? the tumulus before my eye,
Not heaped o'er Ajax, but some other bully?
Helen's abduction, an egregious lie?
The Iliad's hero, a fictitious person, —
In short, the writer a mere Greek Macpherson?

What though old Priam's battle-trump no more
 Rings, but the Turk at Agamemnon's post,
 Where Gods were seen to bivouac of yore,
 Sits moping, like a heron or a ghost!
 I scorn the pedant and his prosing lecture,
 And go for Helen, Hecuba and Hector.

For, is not Tenedos in view? and does
 Not woody Ida, in the distance, lift
 Her dim crest like a thunder cloud? and flows
 Not yellow Xanthus, where the sea-sands shift,
 At the bay's head, beneath whose cape the Greek
 Moors, as ere *Troja fuit*, his caique?

Would thou hadst ears, speech, intellect! as 't is
 I lock thee in my scrutoire; there to sleep,
 Till classed — a theme for erudite surmise
 And sage research, beyond the western deep —
 With skeleton's of mammoths, mermaids, mummies,
 Brickbats from Babylon, and other dummies.

TO A MINIATURE.

"Non mille quod absens."

Painter, my thanks, that thou hast here so perfectly imprest
This tablet with the semblance of the picture in my breast.
Upon these mimic tints to dwell, these airy lights, were vain,
Nor feel they want but life to be the lineaments they feign—

Eyes, peeping from their jetty fringe, like two sly Cupids; hair,
Whose ringlets seem to quit the face they shade and sport in
air;

And lips, twin-sisters of the rose, that buds in either cheek,
That, though they breathe not, seem to breathe, though speak
not, seem to speak;

And brows so fine, 't would seem as, ere those line-like shades
she drew,

Her smallest pencil Nature chose and dipped in twilight dew;
And neck, beside which, bedded in locks loosely curled and light,
The lily were not graceful, nor were falling snow-flakes white.

Idol of years! that flew, so light and swift their flight, as hours—
As they had from a spirit stole his wings, or trod on flowers!
I know not how it is with thee; but, had we never met,
With me there had been more to hope and much less to regret.

For these are features, that, though but their semblance on the
brain

A glance impress, once imaged there, indellible remain ;
The things, Remembrance hides within her inmost room, where
dwell

The forms, whose mould is not of clay, the idols of her cell.

TO THE MEMORY OF A FRIEND.

Heu ! quanto minus est cum reliquis versari
Quam tui meminisse !

Shenstone.

And thou hast past, with fading flowers
And falling leaves, away—
Hast set, thou Pleiad, lost to hope,
But not to memory!
Though far and foreign were the clime,
And lone the spot, where thou art laid,
Absence might not thy soul divide
From mine, nor time thine image shade.

A spirit, that, though housed within
A frail and failing form,
Triumphed o'er sorrow, pain, as shines
A star above the storm;
That, as the rainbow spans the cloud,
At summer's sunset close,
As Death his shadows gathered round,
More bright and lofty rose.

A better world is thine; but were
It not, the loss of this,
— A shadow on the path of time —
Were next to nothingness.
Though early reft of earthly hope,
From earthly trouble free,
The grief is selfish that laments
The loss of one like thee.

MAKING LAND.

Once more my native hills appear;
 But chill the wintry sky and drear:
 Not the deep blue, the golden clouds
 Of climes late left, where Summer showers
 Her fruits; and still, at parting, flings
 O'er Winter's brow her wreath of flowers:
 And though old rock and woodland cape
 And beacon-tower, with airy shape,
 Seem, swiftly coming up from ocean,
 To greet us with a joyous motion,
 And the wild scream of the sea-mew
 Be like a welcome rude but true,
 I heed them not — unfelt they come
 To him, who has no friend, no home;
 For I am as a weed, the foam
 Flings on the rock whence first 't was torn,
 That earth alike and ocean spurn.
 My father's hearth is desolate,
 Or trod alone by stranger-feet;
 Nor sister more, nor early mate,
 My coming there with smiles shall greet:

The feelings I may not repeat
Of hours remembered with a tear —
If thither led, 't will be to hear
No kindred voices, — to behold
No features but the changed or cold

A FAREWELL.

WRITTEN FOR AND AT THE REQUEST OF A FRIEND, ON HIS
LEAVING THE COUNTRY.

Bright are your skies! no lovelier bend
O'er the blossoms and fruits of the year;
And if Liberty e'er found a home or a friend—
But where man is a stranger—'t is here:
But the spirit from tyrants has nothing to fear,
In the pride of her apathy free;
And, with little before to sadden or cheer,
My dark path I trace o'er the sea.

To the land of the olive, the orange and vine,
Of the rose and the nightingale's song—
They may fade or may flourish—they soothe not a mind
That but broods over sorrow and wrong.
'T is the land whose gone glories in memory live,
Like the twilight her summer-eves cast;
And where he, whom the present has nothing to give,
Communion may hold with the past:

May pause and may ponder by ruins, that moan
 To the wind, as complaining of time;
 Or, if mute, like the spirit that stern and alone
 Stands hushed in her grief and sublime.
 They speak not, they hear not; and yet, in their face
 And echoes, a look and a tone
 The heart that is friendless and grief-worn may trace,
 A feeling, a voice, like its own.

But the white sail is set and our ship flings the foam,
 Like a courser that chafes to be free;
 But whither I reckon not—e'en she has a home,
 But, my spirit, where smiles it for thee?
 Shall I go to the halls where my forefathers sleep,
 And tread them in silence alone?
 No eye there is left me to smile, or to weep—
 Let the wind, let the waves waft me on!

Farewell to the few, I have reason to prize—
 To love, were too sacred a word;
 To the many, for whom it were vain to disguise
 The sole feeling years deeper record:
 To the home of my childhood, the haunts of my youth—
 The flowers have long faded, they strew
 In the path of remembrance; the fruits are but ruth;
 Why then grieve as I bid them adieu.

SONNETS.

_____ to me,
In sundry woods, 't was pleasure to be bound
Within the sonnet's scanty plat of ground ;
Pleased if some souls, — for such there needs must be, —
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

Wordsworth.

SONNETS.

I.

SCIO.

Pass we the peak, by summer suns imbrowned;
The dewy glen, where, wooed by bubbling rill,
Unheeded Beauty strews her flowers around;
The chapel, perched, like snow-flake, on the hill —
And lo! a spot as of enchanted ground.
O God! it is a heart-sore sight, to see
Thy fairest works by human hands defaced.
Look on this garden of the bird and bee!
Where Love, 't would seem, his paradise has placed.
Yet here the Moslem, dull, as in a waste,
Like tiger, from the relics of his prey
Unroused, by no avenging weapon chased,
Heeds nor the spring-flower's bloom, nor blithe bird's lay:
The ground is red with blood whereon he kneels to pray.

II.

CROSSING THE BEACH OF ABOUKIR BAY, AT MIDNIGHT.

The moon is up, by light clouds swiftly past,
 Laden with tribute for the infant Nile;
 Peeping at times from the ethereal waste,
 Some solitary star, with fitful smile,
 Trims her small lamp, whose beam may not beguile
 The desert's loneliness; and, on the shore,
 Aboukir's thundering wave untombs the pile
 Of fleshless relics, it had earthed before.
 Far other was the scene, the light, the roar,
 When, like a lurid meteor of the sky,
 Nelson's red cross unfurled its death-sign o'er
 The astonished Gaul!¹ or he,² whose white plume high
 Still, like a standard, led the van of fight,
 Headlong careering, smote the Ottomite.

III.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Pause! for a spirit still pervades the spot,
 Invisible, but felt, and shall pervade;—
 The memory of him,³ whose name to blot
 Time must despair, and whose imperial shade
 Yet awes the world: his goal, a lonely isle;

¹ At the battle of the Nile, which was fought in this bay.

² Murat, who here made one of his most effective charges.

³ Napoleon.

But course, the comet's, that, its meteor car
Urging from some remote abyss, the while
It rushes onward, kindles from a star
Of twinkling lustre to a sun-like flame,
And "from its hair shakes pestilence and war,"
Firing the firmament!—to whom kings came
And sued as bondsmen; at whose feet were laid
Nations in chains; whose Eagles were displayed,
Till earth became a camp—and right, a name.

IV.

TWILIGHT. AT SEA OFF DELOS.

Sweet is the hour to him, that, on the sea
Far gleaming spies the solitary sail;
Or walks remote by woods, where folds the bee
Her weary wing, and flowers the sweets exhale
They hoard by day, and the lone night-bird's wail
Disturbs the echoes of the forest-wild;—
The hour, when winds are still, and stars are pale,
And earth and Heaven seem once more reconciled.
And look! her blush steals on the dewy air,
Her silver girdle for the nightly chase
As Dian belts, and, from her cloudy chair,
O'er Cynthus smiles, with half averted face,
Her farewell to the sun. Long! ere the light
Of this calm eve shall set in memory's night.

V.

RECOLLECTIONS OF GREECE.

'T was late my lot to tread those ancient shores,
Where now the spirit of old inspiration
Mourns by the fount, whose Nymph no longer pours
A hallowed stream; and of a mighty nation,
— Stemming in story, as the eagle soars
Against the wind, the ebbing stream of time —
To mark the mountain birth-place and the grave;
The home of freedom trodden by the slave;
The ruinous dwelling of that soul sublime,
Whose voice is silent now, on shore and wave,
As it had never sounded — a mute thunder:
But not the less we pause in silent wonder,
By tomb or temple, or old stream or dell,
Where poet mused, sage thought, or patriot fell.

VI.

TO A YOUNG MOTHER.

What things of thee may yield a semblance meet,
And him, thy fairy portraiture? a flower
And bud, moon and attending star, a sweet
Voice and its sweeter echo. Time has small power
O'er features the mind moulds; and such are thine,
Imperishably lovely. Roses, where

They once have bloomed, a fragrance leave behind;
 And harmony will linger on the wind;
 And suns continue to light up the air,
 When set; and music from the broken shrine
 Breathes, it is said, around whose altar-stone
 His flower the votary has ceased to twine:—
 Types of the beauty that, when youth is gone,
 Beams from the soul whose brightness mocks decline.

 VII.

LIBERTY.

There is a spirit working in the world,
 Like to a silent subterranean fire;
 Yet, ever and anon, some Monarch hurled
 Aghast and pale attests its fearful ire.
 The dungeon'd Nations now once more respire
 The keen and stirring air of Liberty.
 The struggling Giant wakes, and feels he's free.
 By Delphi's fountain-cave, that ancient Choir
 Resume their song; the Greek astonish'd hears,
 And the old altar of his worship rears.
 Sound on! Fair sisters! sound your boldest lyre,—
 Peal your old harmonies as from the spheres.
 Unto strange Gods too long we've bent the knees,
 The trembling mind, too long and patiently.

VIII.

TO THE PAINTER OF THE PANORAMA OF QUEBEC.

Painters we have — and of the Florentine
And Flemish pencil, it has been my lot
To gaze on shapes — the beings that, once seen,
Like sun-beams haunt the gloom of Memory's grot,
The shadowy saints she worships — pictured thought.
Yet have I turned from them, and owned the power
Of Nature, — river clear, or grassy lap,
Where sleeps the still lake in her forest-bower,
Time-mantled rock, upon whose mossy cap
The snow untouched by summer lies, whose breast
Clouds rolling sweep and waving woods invest.
But thou hast snatched her pencil, and so true
Portrayed her, in her northern colors drest,
Sombre or soft, that them in thine we view.

IX.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE "LIFE OF ASHMUN."

Thy task is o'er; a monument thou here
Hast built, wherein the memory of him,
Whose tribute rightly were a nation's tear,
Shall, like a star no earth-born vapors dim,
Survive, embalmed, like relics in perfumes,
Or regal dust in Cyclopean tombs.

I met thee in life's early day, and still
 Have watched thy course, with a prophetic eye,
 Stealing unheard, but, as the Alpine rill
 Swells to the torrent, destined to a high
 And loud celebrity—the glorious crown
 He wins, who strives truth, virtue to promote;
 And long shall Afric in her heart enthrone
 Thy worth; thy words long treasure in her thought.

X.

SCENE REVISITED AFTER THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

A snow-white beach, a narrow path, that winds,
 Like a foam-ripple, by Potomac's wave,
 O'erhung with cedars and cone-dropping pines.
 And look! the stream lies couched, as in a cave,
 In this lone nook, and doffs his oozy crown—
 Disturbed but by the king-fisher, that down
 Darts, as if bent to battle with his peer;
 The shape with sword-like beak and bristling crest,
 That ever mocks him, imaged in the clear
 Still flood—the semblance of a sky at rest.
 But where is she, whose gentle footsteps seem
 Yet uneffaced, since arm in arm we went
 By this calm water? vanished, as a dream,—
 A star that melts into the firmament!

XI.

SPRING.

Now Heaven seems one bright rejoicing eye,
And Earth her sleeping vesture flings aside,
And with a blush awakes as does a bride;
And Nature speaks, like thee, in melody.
The forest, sunward, glistens, green and high;
The ground each moment, as some blossom springs,
Puts forth, as does thy cheek, a lovelier dye,
And each new morning some new songster brings.
And hark! the brooks their rocky prisons break,
And echo calls on echo to awake,
Like nymph to nymph. The air is rife with wings,
Rustling through wood or dripping over lake.
Herb, bud and bird return—but not to me
With song or beauty, since they bring not thee.

IMITATIONS.

IMITATIONS.

TO MISS * * * * *.

IN THE MANNER OF SWIFT.

Zoe, your virtues I commend,
But with the caution of a friend;
For compliment to creature human
Is, but especially to woman,
As to the weak are wine and victual, —
A drop, a crumb, are scarce too little.
But here you'll mind me of my duty,
And bid me not forget your beauty.
Now for a simile; let's see —
I think I have one to a T.
Beauty is like a glass before
A picture set; that, if its pore
A Venus, without speck or fracture,

Transmit, of Inman's manufacture,
For tint and outline much commended,
Does all for which it was intended.
Now, what the picture to the glass is,
The soul of woman to her face is:
Through which if we the traits but spy
Of head and heart for which we sigh,
No matter, though, at first sight, it
Should put us in a fright or fit,
At length, improving by degrees,
Like wine by age, 't is sure to please.
A truth that, pondered well, I wot
Has cost full many a Jack a thought,
And made his Jill, though plump and fair,
At length seem ugly as a bear.
I might upon your shape dilate,
Your Venus dimple, Juno gait,
The white, that 's in your cheek, and red;
But we'll suppose it has been said.

Launched on the world, with sense to guide,
But in its ways as yet untried,
You mind me of a bark, that, though
The pilot be expert, and go
By star and compass, may be lost,
Without a knowledge of the coast.

Fops will about you buzz and flit
—The bugs, transfix 'em with your wit!
Wasps, that would rob you of your honey,
That is, your morals and your money.
At ball and levee you 'll be noted,
Your dullest things as *bon mots* quoted,
And that, for which you will eclat
Rightly deserve, as a *faux pas*.
So be not anxious there to shine,
—You know the proverb, "Husks for swine," —
But keep your pearls for those who 'll prize 'em;
Puppies and spinsters will despise 'em.

JUDAS, A SKETCH.

IN THE MANNER OF ROCHESTER.

When Judas first we saw among us come,
And 'scape the halter he deserved at home,
He scarcely seemed a thing of blood and breath,
And with the timid might have passed for Death;
And bludgeons warned him from each bolted door,
— Was never seen such earthly shape before!
A knack at cringing, just enough of wit
To hide the scoundrel in the hypocrite,
A countenance of bronze, whose only flush
Was that of malice, guiltless of a blush,
At length procured him, not his true desert
And usual drubbing, but a meal and shirt.
A knave by chance was wanted, and to pass
For such he only had to show his face;
For Providence had kindly planted there
Something that plainly told the world, *beware!*

To preaching next our Judas made pretence,
And never wanted words, though always sense;
The reason was, the first were stolen pelf,

But for the last he trusted to himself:
Some fled the place, the rest remained to snore —
At length, all quit him and he gave it o'er.

In politics his genius then he tried,
And ever battled for the strongest side.
With him, the first in right was first in sway,
And conscience only but the hope of pay;
And though he had no vote, and, what 's as bad,
No candidate would take it if he had,
Grave hints he dropped of friendship with the great,
As if, forsooth, no cipher in the state.

Now, finding all his knavery brought to light,
His very friendship construed into spite,
He closer wraps the hypocritic cloak,
Edges his hate, but smooths his bandit look;
Despairs to rise — so pulls his betters down,
And swears all pay too great, except his own.

LOVE AND REASON.

IN THE MANNER OF PRIOR.

Said Venus, "Cupid, you're no more
A child, to be with Hebe fooling;
A monkey were a fitter mate,—
'T is time you had a little schooling.
There's Ganymede, a boy no bigger
Than you are—beat him if you can—
He sings and fiddles, rhymes and riddles;
In short, is quite the gentleman.

"I'm getting old;—Lud! how these fogs
And bleak winds of Olympus rack us!
Mars ogles less than he was wont,
And Vulcan spends his nights with Bacchus:
To leave you helpless to your kin,
Or stepdame—should he wed—were cruel;
I'm posed to think how you'll contrive,
When I'm defunct, to earn your gruel.

"I'm told there dwells somewhere about
Parnass, a nymph, hight Reason, famed
For brats, like you, that better love
Their pastimes than their books, reclaimed;

For fasting, single life and vigils ;

And,—what will better serve, as *you* know,
To make you mind your Greek and morals,—
She's ugly as that vixen, Juno.

"We'll put you with her for a month,
—A week for prose, and three for rhyme—
I learned to pen a billet-doux,
And thrum a lute, in half the time.
I'll straight despatch my dove to tell her,
You'll make one of her bookish crew;
So take your wing; but leave your quiver,—
The sight of it might fright the 'blue.'"

He went. The dame was busy with
Her wonted round of freakish fancies;
At length, thought she, "I'll go and see
How Cupid with the Nymph advances."
The night was rough. Said Venus, "Sure
They'll not be out this stormy weather:
The door not fast? within there, ho!"
—Reason and Love had fled together.

"I DEEMED I HEARD."**IMITATED FROM THE ROMAIC.**

I deemed I heard, where wild flowers grew,
The morning song of bird and bee ;
The rose was there ; " But where," I said,
" The rose's lover,¹ where is he ? "

So, words from many lips I hear,
That music seem to all but me ;
To other ears they may be sweet,
But not to mine till spoke by thee.

¹ The Nightingale.

TO AN ENGLISH JESUIT AT THE SEA-SIDE.

IN THE MANNER OF BURNS.

RESPECT SIR,

I take my whistle
To blaw ye aff a short epistle;
I hae a stem o' rude Scot's thistle
I sometimes croon;
Though faith! a mortar and a pestle
Were mair in tune.

Ne doubt ye think it strange indeed
I write as if ayont the Tweed;
But then in case I wad na heed
Their Pictish claver,
There's *some*, ye ken, my lug wad screed,
An' slight my favor.

I think I see you draw your whittle,
Toledo true in size an' metal,
An' sittin o'er a reekin kettle
O' gude fat shells,
Fast ply betwixt 'em and your throttle,
Until it swells.

The thoughts of England in your head,
Some luckless night ye'll leave your bed,
An' by some whim ('t were like ye) led,
Or reverie,
Ye'll tak a skiff, I muckle dread,
An' put to sea.

Your catecumens are progressin,
Ne langer now for bas an' dressin
They tell their beads and con their lesson,
Like ony nun;
An' Clootie closely they'll be pressin,
Before they've done.

With him mysel I sometimes meet,
But pass him by, or cauldly greet;
Yet aften-times, before I weet,
He gies a paw;
I eye askance his cloven feet,
An' look awa.

Escap'd frae metaphysic night,
I followed lang some meteor light,
Till reason amaisht tint her sight—
Ye set me straight:
But och! 'tis ten to ane I yet
May tak the gate.

I was by nature like a ruin,
 Or picture o' *Salvator's* doin,—
 Straunge, moody, gloomy, ever brewin
 Of ills to come;
 But now, though ne for mickle shewin,
 I'm seldom grum.

Commen me to your rev'rend brither;
 Heaven ne clip soon his mortal tether,
 An' gie him grace, an' haud togither
 His kail and flock;
 Then, howe'er Clootie claw and blether,
 He'll bide the shock.

I mark'd him weel,—plain, void of art,
 Politeness comin frae the heart,
 An eye, sma, keen, as ony dart,
 To ken what's what:
 An' mony a trick, before ye part,
 I'll wad he's at.

My blessings on your ain kind head!
 May ne thorn spring where'er ye tread;
 Heaven shower its mitres on your head,
 An' spare your life;
 I had amaist forgat, an' said
 Your weans and wife.

"THE DEW DROP SPARKLES ON THE TREE."**IN THE MANNER OF HERRICK.**

The dew-drop sparkles on the tree,
The moon-beam, on the lake;
The air is stirred but where the bird
His night-song trills — awake!
O say not, to the rose he sings,
Or to the lights on high;
'T is to the flower upon thy cheek,
The star that's in thine eye.

Then, lady, up! and from thy bower
A gentle ear incline;
Or speak, and I, as to a lute,
Will gently list with mine.
For who may look upon thine eye,
So like a star, and hear
The music of thy voice, nor think
He listens to a sphere.

DESCRIPTIVE PIECES.

DESCRIPTIVE PIECES.

THE RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER PAN- HELLENIUS, IN THE ISLAND OF ÆGINA.

Lone, from the summit of a lofty isle,
The columns of a ruined temple lift
Their shattered fronts, each with its diadem
Of crumbling architrave and withered weeds.
Nor scroll nor monument records their birth.
A gray fraternity! rough with the dints
Of scars inflicted by the elements —
So old, indeed, and weather-stained, they seem
More ancient than the pinnacle they crown.

Their tenants are the rook, vexing the air
With her still ceaseless clamor, the wild bee,
Feeding upon the myrtle-flowers they shade,
And the small martlet, that delights to build
And sport, as 't were in mockery of man,
Where Desolation has usurped his seat.

A proud and lofty structure in its day!
Peopled, no doubt, with shapes of breathing stone,
And rich in sculpture of historic feats;
But now, consisting of a few gray shafts,
That by the winds, as sea-rocks by the waves,
Wasted, do yet in their old aspects wear
A look of majesty and stern command:
As if some Titan, battling with the Gods,
Had perished, blasted in the very act
To dare their thunder, and there left his bones
Upright and bleaching in the mountain-blast.

We stood together in their noontide shade,
And looked forth on a broad and bright expanse
Of water, that so calmly lay, it seemed
A nether heaven; and, inland, on gray peaks,
Hymettus and Cithæron and the heads
Of dim Parnassus, and the mouldered sites
Of cities, marked by a few straggling huts,
Like graves of heroes by rude, nameless stones.

The face of nature, where it once has been
Deeply imprest, remains indelible,
As does a mother's in the memory
Of an affectionate though weaned child.
Earth, sea and sky have each their votaries,
Their worshipped forms; but, chiefly, forest depths,
That house the eagle, and their giant trunks
See, unmolested by the woodman's stroke,
Ascend, or perish but by that of time.
And surely he, that with rude foot disturbs
The echoes, couched like wood-nymphs in their shade,
And hears the wind prolong, through the deep gloom
Of their o'erarching and wide-spreading boughs,
Its solemn music, and the low, strange sounds,
Uttered as 't were from an unearthly shrine
By powers invisible, and does not feel
The thrill of an imaginative awe,
A visionary consciousness of more
Than meets the sense, is dead to all but thoughts
Of grovelling aim. "Let him forbear," the spirit
Of the old superstition would have said,
"Nor dare provoke the Genius of the spot!"

But in these old and time-worn relics, whose
Majestic columns — now the broken chords,
The harp, whose minstrel is the element —
Erewhile responded with a lofty voice

To festive or heroic argument,
And, hung with garlands like a vernal grove,
Inhaled the incense, heard the vows and were
The council-hall of universal Greece,
There dwells the spirit of a mightier spell,
Whose ministers are proud remembrances,
Linked by indissoluble sympathy
To human hearts — phantoms of haughty sway,
Warlike achievements, hazardous emprise,
Indomitable freedom and the mind, —
The sun, whose light, though past away, has left
A vivifying and creative power
Felt and confest throughout the universe.

THE MOUNTAIN GIRL.

Dulces reminiscitur Argos.

Virgil.

The clouds, that upward curling from
Nevada's summit fly,
Melt into air—gone are the showers,
And, decked, as 't were with bridal flowers,
Earth seems to wed the sky.

All hearts are by the spirit, that
Breathes in the sunshine, stirred;
And there's a girl, that up and down,
A merry vagrant, through the town
Goes singing like a bird.

A thing all lightness, life and glee;
One of the shapes, we seem
To meet in visions of the night;
And, should they greet our waking sight,
Imagine that we dream.

With glossy ringlet, brow, that is
As falling snow-flake white,
Half-hidden by its jetty braid,
And eye, like dew-drop in the shade,
At once both dark and bright:

And cheek, whereon the sunny clime
Its brown tint gently throws,—
Gently, as it reluctant were
To leave its print on thing so fair—
A shadow on a rose.

She stops, looks up—what does she see?
A flower of crimson dye,
Whose vase, the work of Moorish hands,
A lady sprinkles, as it stands
Upon a balcony:

High, leaning from a window forth,
From curtains that half shroud
Her maiden form, with tress of gold,
And brow that mocks their snow-white fold,
Like Dian from a cloud.

Nor flower, nor lady fair she sees—
That mountain girl—but dumb
And motionless she stands, with eye
That seems communing with the sky:
Her visions are of home.

That flower to her is as a tone
Of some forgotten song,
One of a slumbering thousand, struck,
From an old harp-string; but, once woke,
It brings the rest along.

She sees, beside the mountain brook,
 Beneath the old cork-tree,
And toppling crag, a vine-thatch'd shed,
Perched, like the eagle, high o'erhead —
 The home of liberty;

The rivulet, the olive shade,
 The grassy plot, the flock;
Nor does her simple thought forget,
Haply, the little violet,
 That springs beneath the rock.

Sister and mate, they may not from
 Her dreaming eye depart;
And one, the source of gentler fears,
More dear than all, for whom she wears
 The token at her heart.

And hence her eye is dim, her cheek
 Has lost its livelier glow;
Her song has ceased, and motionless
She stands, an image of distress,
 — Strange what a flower can do!

THE GLEN AND BURIAL.¹

It was a spot, that Nature seemed,
In the world's morning, to have dreamed,
And then into existence brought,
— A picture of her sleeping thought.
Nor sound, nor living sight was there;
The thicket seemed untrod, the air
Unbreathed, since early time;
The heaven foreign to the clime;
As thither, since creation's birth,
Had come no living thing of earth;
But blossoms there had made and trees
A paradise, *themselves* to please.

And time-worn rocks the lichen strews,
Like battlements in ruin proud,
Hung o'er it, with the changing hues,
The stillness of a summer cloud:
A quiet place of earth and sky,
Whither one weary of the world might come,
Like a gray pilgrim to his home,
And feel 't were happiness to die.

¹ Of a marine, shot in the Island of Andros.

Midway, along the steep, unworn
By any track, a grassy plot
We found, with vine and turf upborne,
And chose it for a burial spot :
A nook, where one wild tree, all white
With dangling moss, stood half upright,
And looked forth like an anchorite ;
By a spring, so still and clear,
It seemed a nether hemisphere —
A glass, wherein a Nymph, I ween,
Naiad, or Dryad, had been seen,
In ancient days and summer hours,
Knitting her tresses with the flowers, —
A nameless tribe, you there may see,
With no companion but the bee,
Breathing, like Nuns in silent prayer,
Their souls into the quiet air.

Few, but sincere, the rites we paid ;
The earth, the turf, not rudely laid, —
A few green twigs, of growth unknown,
Set round a nameless, shapeless stone ; —
And thrice the flashing volley woke
The echoes, — thrice rang out their knell
Old wood and owlet-haunted rock —
A last and meet farewell.

CAPE COLONNA.

'T is summer's eve. The winds are still;
So calmly hushed the waters lie,
So softly bright, they seem to blend
In airy distance with the sky.
What hues of gorgeous beauty, o'er
Morea's hills and mountains rolled,
Their summits veil! where sinks the sun,
A monarch to his couch of gold.
From them I turn; from isles, along
Whose wild and lofty summits driven,
The rosy twilight lingers, till
They seem to melt and blend with Heaven:—
Turn to the ruin, lone and dim,
That bears the name, and should have crowned
The dust of him,¹ the spirit of
Whose song, though mute, is breathed around.
Minstrel! the thrilling summons of
Whose lyre the men of Greece obeyed—
Soldier! whose charge had freed them, ere
His hand had sheathed her battle-blade!
Here should his relics rest, beside
This time-worn column, gray and rent;
His name, his epitaph; the stone,
Whereon 't is graved, his monument.

¹ Byron, whose name is inscribed on one of the columns.

THE LOST PLEIAD.

*Quæ septem — sex.**Ovid.*

There were Seven Sisters, and each wore
A starry crown, as, hand in hand,
By Hesper woke, they led the hours
— The minstrels of his virgin band.

And Love would come at eve, as they
Were met their vesper hymn to sing,
And linger till it ceased, with eye
Of raptur'd gaze and folded wing.

For ne'er on earth, in air, were heard
More thrilling tones than, to the lyre
Of Heaven timed, rose nightly from
The lips of that young virgin choir.

But they were coy, or seeming coy,
Those minstrels of the twilight hour, —
Nuns of the sky, as cold and shy,
As blossoms of the woodland bower.

'T was eve, and Hesper came to wake
His starry troop, but wept — for one,
The brightest, fairest of the group,
Where all were bright and fair, was gone.

They found within her bower the harp
To which was tuned her vesper-hymn, —
The star-gems of her coronet,
And one was with a tear-drop dim.

They told how Love had at the gate
Of twilight lingered, long before
The day-light set ; — but he was flown,
And she, the lost one, seen no more.

THE WEEPING MAGDALEN,

A PICTURE IN A SICILIAN CHURCH.

Upon her hand she leans her cheek,
Where stands a tear about to fall;
Her eye upon the lily rests,
That springs beside her, white and tall,
Reminding her of days, when she
Was spotless as the vestal flower,—
Blest days, alas! how much unlike
Her dark and penitential hour.

A string of pearls is at her feet,
That broken and unheeded lies;
The cross is to her pale lip prest,
The lip of grief that speaks in sighs:
The hope, for hope is there, that through
Her features, softly lighted, plays,
Is as the star that gilds the night,
Whose skies transmit, yet dim its rays.

Like one she seems whose feelings, thoughts
Have nought to do with earthly things,

Save what the past, to Sorrow's eye,
Of grief that once was gladness brings :
Like one that stands at Heaven's gate,
Of earthly comfort, aid, bereft ;
And for admittance waits, yet fears
Some frailty, unatoned for, left.

RAMBLINGS IN AUTUMN.

The outward shows of earth and sky
Of hill and valley he had viewed.

Wordsworth.

Through a wide valley, stretching far away,
Sequestered, green, among the woodland hills,
Winds a small creek, an humble vassal, bent
To bear the tribute gathered in its course
From rills of reedy outlet to the sea.

Through reaches of thick meadow-grass it winds,
Where, in my rambling days of boyhood, I,
With other truant imps, — peripatetics
Of nature's good old school, the fields and woods,
Sworn foes to Greek, but deeply read in tongues
Of birds and insects, rivulets and trees,
From the tall forest, where the eagle, high
Above their missiles, plants his stick-built fort,
To the small flower, that, crouching at its foot,
Shrinks nestling, and her tinctur'd kerchief spreads
To shield her beauty from the April air, —
Have basked and tumbled a whole summer's day;
Or, if at times roused to more active sport,

Chasing in vain but still renewed pursuit,
—Like the great children of the busy world,
Toys light as pleasure, fickle as renown,—
The yellow butterfly; or the small bird
That feeds on flowers, and seems, with her rich plumes,
To imbibe the tincture of their many hues.

Into the meadows from the woodland hills,
At intervals projecting, may be spied
A long, low cape of verdant upland, clumped
At its extremity with beech and oak,
As 't were a veteran outpost planted there
To watch and check incursions of the creek;
Who swollen, at certain changes of the moon,
Like lunatic that deems himself a king,
Quits his scant channel, as he did disdain
The crown of tributary sedge he strews,
Flooding his banks. And, looking ocean-ward,
A ledge, at times, of old fantastic rock
Lifts its huge form, with trees of knotty growth
Shot slanting from its clefts and edged with copse;
The bramble that the purple berry, like
A ruby in a wood-nymph's chaplet, wears;
The flaunting ivy, thrusting forth her flowers
Like village maid vain of her charms; and, rare,
The sweet-briar blossom, Flora's nun, that loves
To hide her blushing beauty from the world,

And die unseen:—lone dwellers of the rough
And tangled ways, with whom we sympathize,
As things, though beautiful, and not without
A seeming sense of their own loveliness,
That spring and bloom, and to their graves go down,
Like humble worth, unnoticed and unwept.

And far beyond, and at the valley's head,
Frowns o'er the scene a forest of old trees,
Dusky, and printing on the northern sky
His shaggy outline; nor less crowns the hills,
On this side rocky, high and rudely piled,—
On that, with lazy slope, grassy and green;
Both stretching towards the ocean, till they end,
Like headlands, in the sea-like meadow flats.

It is a spot where I have spent the hours,
I feel the least reluctance to recall.
There did my boyhood sport, or idly gaze,
— Seeking the thickest shade at noontide thrown —
Upon the still and gorgeous scenery
Of wood and sky and clouds, in whose bright shapes
It feigned a world of airy images;
Gay shapes of living things, castles and spires,
Turrets and battlements and gilded roofs,—
All I had pictured of old Fairy-land,
And sighed, if boy may sigh, to see them fade,

And think they were too beautiful to last:
There watched the wheeling eagle, with my hand
Shading my eye, till dwindled to a speck
Or turned to air; and longed to have his wing,
To roam those wondrous regions, and to visit
Far distant lands, whereof I'd heard strange tales;
And some, I live to find, more strange than true.

It was among my earliest haunts, and last
Within that ancient neighborhood; and ere
I bade, though freed from academic shades,
A transient visitant, farewell to home,
I spent a day of rambling there, to dwell
Once more upon its features, as a friend's,
A sister's, known and loved from infancy.

It was a morn in autumn, a bright morn:
The web hung without motion from the tree;
The light down, shaken by the sparrow from
The thistle, rose not into the still air;
And a faint haziness, as it had been
A white, transparent veil flung o'er a nun
Bending in worship at the altar, lent
A softness and solemnity to Nature,
That with my feelings and the fading pomp
Of woods accorded, in whose changing hues,
Though summer cheered them with a lingering smile,

And hung upon their sheltered skirts, was read
A farewell to her reign. So, venturing forth,
With no companion but a friend, my dog,
I took a skiff, and let the quiet flood
Of that small creek drift me along; at times,
Dipping my oar, thereby to shun some cape
Or reef of sand, or headland of shell-bank.
Now, as I doubled some low jutting shelf,
A clam would spit; or from the reeds would spring,
Whirring, the meadow-wren, and start and stare
And sputter, lighting, from their bending tops,
As if indignant and no less amazed,
That I should thus, with causeless and ill-timed
Approach, upon the privacy intrude
And urgent duties of her precious life:
Or meditative heron, perched upon
The timber-head of some old hulk, half sunk
And strewn with barnacles, would slowly thrust
Above the sedge his long, lank neck; then crouch,
And floundering upwards, with an awkward flap
Of his dank wing, and knot of sea-grass dangling
From his long legs, thrown backward and uncouth,
Saunter away to some more quiet haunt:
Or sentry crow, caught sleeping at his watch,
Bestirred himself and called with hurried croak
Unto his fellows, that with clamorous cry
Rose and their train winged blackening to the wood.

Thus sped my voyage of small adventure, till
Borne quietly along, far up the creek,
I flung a few links of a rusty chain
Over my paddle, thrust into the bank,
And upward strolled towards a ruined house
Upon an eminence, beneath the frown
Of a tall wood of aged walnut trees:
As if some ghost, that haunted their dim shade,
Had ventured forth to breathe the purer air
And feel the blessed sun.— In boyhood, oft,
This lonely, windowless, dismantled shell
Of an old tenement had been a theme
Of speculation and much wonderment.
Strange faces, if old legends rightly tell,
Stared at the paneless windows; voices strange,
At twilight, as the mower through the wood
Returned from laboring in the meadows, oft
Had put him, breathless, to his utmost speed,
With fright, o'er brake and bush—he scarce knew where,—
Nor dared to look behind, till, all aghast,
He stood the wondering family before,
Speechless, and telling in his looks his tale.
Like other Infidels, we laughed and still
Believed; and, gathered in an idle group,
Fast by the root of yon old tree, listened
To one, more grave and knowing than the rest,
Who, heard with gaping wonder, much discoursed

Of things of high inquiry, in old days,—
Witches and ghosts and armies in the sky,
And pots of buried gold, that sank when struck,
Watched by the grisly phantom of old Kidd,
With rusty pistol stuck beneath his belt,
And blood-stained hanger, through which, as it waved,
Glimmered the moon—a shadowy shape of air.
Where are they now? The flowers of other lands,
Unconscious mourners, dew the graves of some;
And some, perchance the happier few, have found
A simple, but not nameless grave at home;
Others, like me, still wander on, to find
Not vainly did the ancients picture Hope
With lifted wing, as she would fly, and foot
But touching earth, as it were not her home.
Among them there was one, beside the door
Of the old mansion of whose boyhood grew
Two willows, in whose still shade he was wont
Outstretched to lie, through the long summer-days,
And dream of much, 't was then and since has been
His aim, but not his lot, to realize.
Years came, at length, of less impassion'd hope;
And he had wandered long, and Nature wooed
In all, but chiefly her untrodden haunts,
With an unwean'd fondness,—shunned his kind,
And, smitten with her naked loveliness,
Sought her by forest, cataract and dell,

O'er ocean and the isles; for they to him
Were things of old affection,—things that stamped
Indelibly their image on his soul,
Haunting him still through solitude and crowds,
Through grief and joy, like thoughts of early love.
He had stored his mind too with ideal shapes,—
The grand and beautiful, the dark and bright,
Lovely and terrible, all airy things
That fancy moulds and hides, like pictured saints,
In Memory's cell. The ruins of old days,
The skeletons of empire's sepulchre,
Had glared upon him—fittest to inspire
Thoughts deep and unforgotten: and yet ne'er
Saw he, in all his wanderings, or felt
Aught to compare with the forgetful hours
He spent, a boy, recumbent in the shade
Of those two willows; and he sees them still,
Visible, tangible to his mind's eye,
As when in spring they put forth their green leaves,
Scenting, at morn, the dewy air with balm,
Or echoing to the hum of noontide bee.

Reaching the skirts of the old wood, I paused,
And leisurely sat down upon a stump;
Suffering the quiet beauty of the hour,
With all its soft but bright serenity,
The place, with all its gorgeous scenery

Of fading forest hues, rich light and shade,
To fit me, passive, for that idle mood
Of dreaming wakefulness, in which, I blush
Or at least ought to blush, to say I've spent
The better part of a most worthless life;
A life of castle-building in the clouds
— Things not precisely of earth or Heaven —
And such my wishes, schemes, and hopes have been.

All was so still that I could almost count
The tinklings of the falling leaves. At times,
Perchance, a nut was heard to drop, and then,
— As if it had slipped from him as he struck
The meat, — a squirrel's short and fretful bark.
Anon, a troop of noisy, roving jays,
Whisking their gaudy top-knots, would surprise
And seize upon the top of some tall tree,
Shrieking, as if on purpose to enjoy
The consternation of the noontide stillness.
Roused by the din, the squirrel from his hole,
Like some grave justice bent to keep the peace,
Thrust his gray pate, much wondering what it meant.
And squatted near me on a stone, there basked
A fly of larger breed and o'ergrown bulk,
In the warm sunshine, vain of his green coat
Of variable velvet laced with gold,
That, ever and anon, would whisk about,

Vexing the stillness with his buzzing din,
As human fopling will do with his talk :
And, o'er the mossy post of an old fence,
Lured from its crannies by the warmth, was spied
A swarm of gay motes waltzing to a tune
Of their own humming :— quiet sounds that serve
More deeply to impress us with a sense
Of silent loneliness and trackless ways.

Round the old tenement, towards which I drew
With a strange thrill, that made me closer strain
And gladly feel my cudgel in my grasp,
And swing it with an air of courage, all
Was still and lone and lifeless as the grave.
At times, indeed, upon its rusty hinge
A door was heard to creak ; whereat I'd halt —
Then whistling pluck up courage and proceed,
Stealing a shy glance at the rattling frame
Of an old window, whence, in days gone by,
Ghosts had been known, as I have said, to stare.

A few old straggling posts, half sunk in earth,
And alleys edged with stunted boxwood, told
Where once had been a garden. The rank sward,
Brambles and weeds—the savage hordes that press
Defenceless culture from her flowery walks —
Had o'errun bed and bower, trampling each plant

Of delicate and artificial growth ;
Save where, perchance, with look half wild half tame,
Some fruit-tree sapling battled for the soil
Of his more civilized progenitors,
Or straggling honeysuckle, or rose-bush,
By her red bulbs betrayed, the fragrance of
Whose sear leaf like a sigh stole on the sense,
Seemed gently to implore the passer-by,
And crave a rescue from intruding thorns : —
All, but the sunflower ; she, in gorgeous trim,
With queen-like air, rose stately and apart,
And proudly wore her diadem of gold,
And bent not but in worship to her love.

In front, an aged oak his knotted, knarl'd
And mossy branches threw forth with an air
Of battle and defiance to the winds,
That for a century had swept his leaves,
But not his strength, to oblivion and decay : —
A type of virtue warring against fortune ;
Shorn of the honors that the world confers,
Thence unimpaired, and bending to the stroke
Alone of Heaven. His root showed traces still
Of scars, by hatchet of mischievous imps
Inflicted ; and, beyond their aim, was spied,
Half-hidden by the smooth and jutting rind,
A rusty horse-shoe — sov'reign antidote

'Gainst witchcraft — to whose virtue, doubtless, owed
The tree his green and vigorous old age.
With names and dates uncouth the trunk was scored,
Like a sepulchral shaft; at first, misspelt;
Now, quite illegible — emblem of all
Ambition leaves to Time, the scoffer, who
These vain, though rudely etch'd memorials, seemed
To have set in jumbled and fantastic shapes,
As 't were on purpose to provoke a laugh.

Without, at either end, a chimney heaved
Its shapeless stack of no less shapeless stones,
Rent, as by lightning, with dry knots of grass
And sticks of wrens' nests thrust in every chink.
Long! since the chattering tenant of the eaves
Had at the lattice, as the day-star bade
His dewy farewell to the morning, peeped,
Shaking the fragrance from its clustering flowers,
To greet the simple inmates. Long! since curled
From the old chimney-top the quiet smoke;
Fragments of which lay scattered on the roof,
The roof, by plants of creeping growth o'errun,
And moss, spongy and green, with here and there
A weed or toadstool sprouting from its tufts.

Nor had the nibbling, cankering tooth of time
Less busy been within. A door aslant,

Held by a single rusty hinge, revealed
A passage, trailing at whose entrance, waved
A cobweb, hung with carcasses of flies.
The scantlings of the floor were loose and warped,
And, here and there, a head of rusty nail
Had started from them. Wasp-combs on the wall
Warned the bee elsewhere, if she would her sweets
See safely stowed, to excavate her cell ;
And, in a corner, was a squirrel's hole,
Through which long nettles shot towards the light ;
And, peeping forth, the husk of an old ear
Of corn betrayed the pilferer, and shells
Of mouldy nuts were strewn about its edge ;
And, on the sunken hearth-stone, beneath whose
Gray slab he burrowed, lay a half-burnt brand
And fragments of a chimney swallow's nest.

And, in the rear, and sparingly secured
By a few straggling lengths of fence — much like
An old estate, by a defective deed —
Dank rotting masses of coarse meadow-grass
Stood smoking in the sun, eaten away
At bottom, like a group of sea-worn rocks ;
At one of which a savage of a steer
Was planted, goring with his short sharp horns
The mouldy fodder, which he tossed about
And trampled, as I've known a testy brat

To wreck his spite on an unsavory meal :—
Dislodging a whole family of mice,
Forced from the nook, — where they had thought to house
And doze secure while winter swept the sod, —
To migrate, and their warm and quiet nest
See piece-meal scattered by the Autumn blast.
At sight of me he paused ; and, pricking forth
His shaggy ears, advanced with seeming air
Of battle, and defiance ; but, in sooth,
Of perturbation and mute wonderment.
The face of man to him was strange and dread ; —
An unclaimed fugitive, whose neck no badge
Wore of subjection to the yoke ; whose crib
Had been the brake, and stall, the forest-walks.

The lonely hours thus idly, busy flew,
In that half listless, half observant mood,
When thoughts of serious or of sportive aim
Alike impress us, till the gorgeous west
Sunset lit up, with all the drapery
Wherewith she loves to deck her couch of clouds, —
The last I've seen, and, haply, e'er shall see
Sink o'er those hills and linger o'er those woods.

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